Extension of SAIL's activities

89.SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Steel Authority of India (SAIL) proposes to embark upon an ambitious programme to increase its activities in various fields both in India and abroad over the next few years; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the likely investment required for the purpose and how the same is proposed to be acquired?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (DR. AKHILESH DAS): (a) Yes, Sir. SteelAuthority of India Limited (SAIL) has drawn up its Corporate Plan to increase its Hot Metal production capacity from a current level of 13 MT to about 22.5 MT by 2011-12.

(b) The existing assets in all the Steel Plants will be revamped, debottlenecking done to improve reliability in production and quality and new equipment installed to enhance production.

There will also be investment for development of SAIL's iron ore mines and obtaining strategic of Raw materials like Coking Coal and infrastructure like Railways and Ports.

An investment of a level of Rs. 35,000 crores to enhance its production has been planned for all the above. The financing of investment will mostly be from internal accruals and borrowings, if necessary, keeping debt equity ratio at optimum levels.

Merger of PSUs

90. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any proposal for merger of all Government steel plants with a view to compete with the domestic Private companies and international companies;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when such a merger is likely to take place and how the merger would benefit the Government owned steel companies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (DR. AKHILESH DAS): (a) to (c) The Government has approved the merger